

In the Forefront

Interagency Council on Drug Abuse

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CALIFORNIA INTERAGENCY COUNCIL on Drug Abuse (CIACODA) — established in October 1968 by California Medical Association in co-operation with the State of California and the Parent-Teacher Association—is a clearing house for the exchange of information and techniques found useful in combatting the state's drug abuse problem.

The Council is composed of six statewide task forces—treatment, research, education, administration of justice, legislation and government, youth — each focusing upon its specialized field of interest within the overall problem. The six task forces convene as the Council to facilitate communications among the six and to insure against imbalance among the diverse points of view and special interests represented.

Functions

In a state as large and populous as California, the primary need of the hundreds of organizations and programs of drug abuse prevention, education, treatment, research and rehabilitation is for information. Eighteen meetings of the various task forces were held in the first year of CIACODA operation, providing a means for some two to three hundred persons, representing dozens of organizations, to share information about drug abuse programs and activities. In addition, many of the organizations represented have published useful information in their own newsletters and disseminated materials to their membership.

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Reprint requests to: California Interagency Council on Drug Abuse, California Medical Association, 693 Sutter Street, San Francisco, California 94122.

Coordination

Although coordination of the efforts of the many organizations and individuals involved is only now beginning, much already has been accomplished by joint effort. Four member organizations have acted together to bring about the publication of a medically approved brochure for statewide distribution. Surveys are now available of all drug abuse treatment and referral resources in the state.

Educational programs are being surveyed and a comparative study is under way to determine the differential effectiveness of various educational methods. Coordination of drug abuse materials is being attempted: some 3,000 pieces of drug abuse literature, including bibliographies and motion picture information, have been reviewed and are on file in a clearing house. Samples of approved and recommended brochures and booklets are available.* Many scientific papers and books are also available and single copies are given or lent to professional and lay groups and individuals. Approximately 10,000 requests for material of this kind have been filled to date.

Consultation

A task force on Drugs and Alcoholism of the California Council on Criminal Justice is the latest organization to seek consultation from CIACODA. Consultation has been provided also to many local and county groups, to the Advisory Panel on Drug Abuse Education, the Advisory Panel on

*For example, the medically approved text of the "Health Forum" publication "Damaging Effects of Drug Abuse" has been reprinted (with CMA permission by San Mateo Citizens' Council on Drug Abuse as a brochure, and under the title "Drug Abuse" by the Department of the Youth Authority.

Drug Abuse Research, and the Drug Abuse Information Center, all three of which were set up by statute. In addition, CIACODA is an officially recognized advisory body to the Governor. The chairman has testified repeatedly before congressional and state legislative hearings.

Another activity was a joint survey carried out by CIACODA and the Drug Information Center at UCSF Medical Center to supplement the Center's third annual report to the Legislature. CIACODA is currently cooperating in a Department of Mental Hygiene Survey.

Representation

CIACODA has received cooperation and encouragement from a wide range of organizations and agencies, public and private, concerned with drug abuse. The work of the Council is done by the task forces, and membership, meetings and participation are generally open to all interested persons and organizations. Three representatives of each task force meet together as a council. These are specified as follows:

Administration of Justice: The president of the California Association of Peace Officers, one designee of the Bar Association, one designee of the Judicial Council.

Legislation and Government: One representative of the Executive Branch, one designee of the Speaker of the Assembly, one designee of the President *pro tem* of the Senate.

Education: One representative of the schools, one representative of the community, and one representative of the media.

Treatment: The presidents of the California Conferences of Local Health Officers and of Directors of Mental Health and a representative of the California Medical Association.

Research: Three nationally known researchers in drug abuse, elected by the task force, (which includes virtually all of the prominent researchers in California).

Youth: Three young people elected by the task force, (which includes youth from a wide range of segments of the population).

In addition, many self-help groups of former drug users, all the relevant official agencies of government and a large number of professional organizations throughout the state have contributed to the initial impetus of CIACODA.

Funding

Each of the organizations and associations represented on the CIACODA has absorbed the expenses of its representative in the first year of operation. The California Medical Association has borne the administrative cost and has provided a part-time coordinator. CIACODA has also had the consultation and support of the CMA Committee on Dangerous Drugs. Consultation has also come from the state departments of Education and Public Health, and meeting space has been provided by the Department of Public Health, the California Teachers Association, several county health departments, and others.

As CIACODA enters its second year of operation, limited funds are being made available through the Council on Criminal Justice and possibly some from the American Medical Association and from the National Institute of Mental Health. The Drug Abuse Information Center and the Drug Abuse Education Advisory Panel are both funded by statute, but with decidedly limited budgets. The Drug Abuse Research Advisory Panel, also set up by legislative action, is not funded at all. In each instance, through overlapping membership and with much consensus of objectives, the corresponding task forces of CIACODA seek to aid the work of these groups and plan to continue to cooperate with each of them.

Projects

Each task force has undertaken one or more projects in the past year. For example, the task force on treatment is in the process of publishing a manual and flow-chart for drug abuse treatment facilities. It is planned to distribute this (as an appendix to the toxicology manual) to every hospital emergency room, mental health center and "free" clinic in the state. In the coming year CIACODA plans statewide conferences on community drug abuse programs (for those engaged in or planning community programs) and possibly conferences on nalorphine testing, and on methadone maintenance. Publication of additional materials is under consideration. Expansion and support of minority-group representation, employment of former users, and activities proposed by the task force on youth are additional projects, and consultation and coordination efforts will be increased.